

## ***FAMILY LITERACY***



The federal definition of family literacy services used in the Elementary and Secondary Act (including Title I, Even Start, etc.), the Head Start Act, the Community Services Block Grant Act, and the Workforce Investment Act (including the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) brings commonality for family literacy programs. It allows collaboration in order to provide services commonly defined by major funding streams.

The term “family literacy” means services that are of sufficient intensity in terms of hours, and of sufficient duration, to make sustainable changes in a family and that integrate all of the following activities:

- (A) Interactive literacy activities between parents and their children.
- (B) Training for parents regarding how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children.
- (C) Parent literacy training that leads to economic self-sufficiency.
- (D) An age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences.



## ***Adult Education***

The Adult Education component is designed to extend basic education skills. More than just an academic, GED preparation, work-focused or ESL program, a family literacy adult education class teaches adults at all levels and abilities to:

- think critically and creatively
- solve problems
- set goals and achieve them
- acquire successful interpersonal skills

Family literacy instructional methods combine the more traditional individualized and tutor-assisted study with active learning. An adult education teacher often employs peer collaboration, balancing both large and small groups.



## ***Children's Education***

The Children's Education component is designed to promote the growth and development of young children and to engage parents in their child's educational program in order to foster meaningful involvement that will be maintained throughout the child's educational career.

This component uses a developmentally appropriate curriculum that focuses on the whole child and emphasizes the development of literacy. The child's cognitive, physical, social and emotional skills develop through:

- active exploration and investigation
- personal discovery
- reorganization of the physical environment
- support from adults



### ***Parent and Child Together (PACT) Time aka Parent Child Interactive Literacy (PCIL)***

Parents who support their children's learning contribute to their children's successes both in school and in life. The Parent and Child Together Time component provides the opportunity for parents and children to interact together as a family unit. For the most part, the children's interests and preferences drive activities, with parents following their lead. Staff members help parents learn how to support their children's learning through interaction with each other in meaningful activities, including play. The reciprocal learning that takes place during this time offers parents and children a chance to become true partners in education. At the end of the session, a literacy-focused large group activity provides ideas for transferring learning to the home and brings closure to the session.

When parent and child interact during PACT Time, enhancing and enriching their relationship is the primary goal. Therefore, PACT Time is:

- a regularly scheduled session
- a quality one-on-one time for children with their parents
- interaction between parent and child in meaningful activities
- child centered



## ***Parent Education***

A strong effective Parent Education component is a key ingredient in successful family literacy programs. This component:

- provides information on effective life skills, issues critical in the lives of families, literacy and child development, parenting skills, and work-readiness
- connects parents with a wide array of community resources
- provides parents with opportunities to network and develop mutual support systems with others in the program

A significant portion of the new information provided for parents addresses children's growth and development and their relation to cognitive processes. Often the child's teacher (or P.A.T. parent educator) facilitates Parent Education. These teachers not only know about child growth and development, but their knowledge of children in the program is particularly helpful in guiding instruction.

During Parent Education, parents learn to assess many resources within the larger community. As they strengthen skills, confidence develops, and expectations for themselves and their children change.

Parent Education is a good place for parents to connect and bond, offering the opportunity to both give and receive support. Parents practice goal-setting and problem solving strategies to realize those goals and begin to see themselves as change agents.